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Identifier: Masayoshi SUZUKI, et al.

REMARKS

Claim 16 has been rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph and claims 1 and 16 have been rejected for being anticipated by Ikunishi et al (USPubNo.20030053772).

Applicant has amended claims 1, 16 18-20 and provided new Claim 21. Claim 16 has been amended to identify the cores in the last line of the claim are the peeled cores. As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejection under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph has been overcome. Support for the recitations that the cores do not intersect, as provided in amended claims 1 and 16, is found in the stated figures and on page 10, lines 28-30 which discloses that the eight illustrated optical cores are mutually parallel. Furthermore, the recitation in Claim 21 of the silicone rubber being arranged on one side of the core assembly is illustrated in the stated figures. Claims 18-20 have been amended to depend only from Claim 16.

Regarding the rejection over Ikunishi, the claimed optical fiber tape core has the following features:

1. an optical fiber core assembly with plural optical fiber cores two-dimensionally arranged in parallel with each other so that the cores do not intersected at any location along the cores; and
2. a coating layer formed of silicone rubber and arranged on at least one side of the optical fiber core assembly.

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In particular, in the optical fiber tape core of claim 1, the plural optical fiber cores are arranged in parallel and not intersected at any position (hereinafter referred to as Feature 1). Therefore, each of the optical fiber cores is completely covered with the silicone rubber. Thereby, the object of the present invention is achieved, that is, an optical fiber tape core, which has excellent strength and good flexibility and hardly retains a wound shape (curling) can be provided.

In contrast, the object of Ikunishi (US 2003/0053772 A1) is to provide an optical fiber sheet, where the ports can be distinguished from one another by identifying which of a plurality of input ports and/or a plurality of outputs ports at least one optical fiber belongs as disclosed in paragraph [0005]. In order to achieve the object, the optical fibers are arranged so that they are combination converted between the plurality of input ports and the plurality of output ports as disclosed in paragraph [0012]. The word "combination conversion" is used to refer to a state where a plurality of optical fibers of at least one input port are provided branching to a plurality of output ports, and/or a state where optical fibers from a plurality of input ports are provided to at least one output port, as explained in paragraph [0014]. In other words, as shown in Figures 1 and 3 of Ikunishi, the optical fibers included in the optical fiber groups are intersected in Ikunishi. That is, Ikunishi does not disclose Feature 1.

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As explained above, the object of Ikunishi and the present invention is different. In addition, Ikunishi does not disclose Feature 1. Therefore, Ikunishi does not teach the claimed invention.

Furthermore, the coating layer formed of silicone rubber is arranged on one side of the optical fiber core assembly in the optical fiber tape core of new Claim 21 of the present invention. Even if the coating layer is arranged on only one side of the optical fiber core assembly, since the plural optical fiber cores are two-dimensionally arranged in parallel with each other, and they are not intersected at any position in the present invention, the each of the plural optical fiber cores is completely fixed with the coating layer. Thereby, strength flexibility, and anti-curling properties are more improved.

In contrast, since the optical fiber cores are intersected, and an optical fiber core is overlapped with another optical fiber as shown in Figure 1 of Ikunishi, the reference does not provide for fixing each of the optical fiber cores with the coating layer which is formed on one side of the optical fiber cores.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Applicant respectfully requests a one month extension of time for responding to the Office Action. The fee of \$120.00 for the extension is provided for in the charge authorization presented in the PTO Form 2038, Credit Card Payment form, provided herewith.

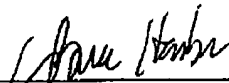
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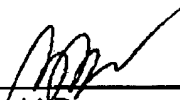
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In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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